



THE CHAPBOOK

A MISCELLANY

February 1922

No. 25

TWELVE NEW POEMS BY
CONTEMPORARY POETS

THE POETRY BOOKSHOP, 35 DEVONSHIRE ST., THEOBALDS RD., LONDON, W.C.1



ONE SHILLING NET

THE CHAPBOOK (A Miscellany) first appeared in July, 1919, as a substitute for *Poetry and Drama* (A Quarterly Periodical). It is published about the middle of the month. The following is a list of the numbers that have already appeared :—

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THE CHAPBOOK

(A MISCELLANY)

EDITED BY HAROLD MONRO

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The Cover Design and the Decorations interspersed through the Text are by the late Claud Lovat Fraser. The Device on the back of the Cover is by James Guthrie.

THE NEXT NUMBER of THE CHAPBOOK will consist of an Essay entitled ROMANTICISM IN ENGLISH POETRY: COLERIDGE TO DE LA MARE, by R. J. RANDERSON, together with a Prefatory Essay by HAROLD MONRO.

THE SUBSCRIPTION TO THE CHAPBOOK is (for any period and to any part of the world) at the rate of 1s. per number (1d. postage). For further details, see the Editorial Note on page 4.

Editorial Note

WHEN this Periodical first appeared in 1919, it was thought possible to sell it at one shilling a copy. Printing rates then, however, were showing a tendency to increase rather than decline, and unfortunately after the third number it was found necessary to raise the price to one shilling and sixpence. This figure always seemed too high, and the opportunity was eagerly awaited to diminish it.

About the middle of last year there were distinct, though insufficient, signs of an abatement of printing charges. Pending the materialisation of these signs THE CHAPBOOK was suspended for six months from the publication of Number 24.

It now becomes just possible, by reason of slightly reduced expenses and certain economies in production, to return to one shilling. Publication is being resumed experimentally and gradually. The present number is the first of the two quarterly issues of which the second will appear on 15th May. From 15th July onwards monthly publication will be resumed. Thus eight numbers will appear during 1922.

It is not the Editor's desire to trouble the readers of THE CHAPBOOK with details of its internal affairs: this short explanation does, however, appear necessary.

Those who are interested in the periodical, and desire to promote its welfare, are particularly requested to send 8s. 8d. to cover a subscription for the current year.

A glance down the Lists of Back Numbers on pp. 2 and 23 will show the variety of their Contents.

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1. They will not be received if brought by hand to the Poetry Bookshop.
2. They must be sent by post, with a stamped addressed envelope (sufficiently large) for their return in case of rejection.
3. They cannot be acknowledged.
4. They cannot be examined within any specified period.
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NOTE.—All MSS. receive careful consideration. Sometimes brief criticism is offered, but where they have not been accepted no further correspondence will be carried on regarding them.

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The Collar

WHO taught fair Cleopatra how to bring
Mark Antony to her knees—the touch of love,
As soft as velvet, that could stroke the wing
Of a butterfly and take no powder off ;
The gentle purr that made eternal Rome,
With all its marble, melt in that sweet sound,
And vanish like the mist, when it has come
Into a man's full height above the ground ?
When I see how a cat has, even now,
With its own body curled and crouching low,
Made a large, heavy collar, soft and warm,
For that girl's neck, I think, with no alarm,
If, young one, that's your friend—as it was Hers—
I'll watch you round the corner of my fears.

Strength

WHAT lies I read, that men of strength
Have keen and penetrating looks
That, flashing here and flashing there,
Command success—what foolish books !
For when we go to life we find
The men and dogs that fight till death
Are sleepy eyed, and look so calm
We wonder if they live by breath !
Love too must hold her saucy tongue,
And turn on us two sleepy eyes,
To prove she is no painted doll,
And full, like books, of pretty lies.

The Spell

I STOOD by a river in Hindostan
On a league long bridge with a single span,
There came to me Julia, John and Ann.

In snow white silk was Julia dressed
Ann too ; but John (at his own request)
In a crimson cloak and a saffron vest.

In pale green shoes came Julia nigh ;
Ann's hair had a riband of pale green dye ;
And John (aged four) had a pale green tie.

And I knew at the sight of the pale green token
That Words of Magic would soon be spoken,
And the horrible spell that bound me, broken.

The horrible spell was threefold—Not
To learn Urdu ; To be fiery hot
In temper ; and Always to miss when I shot.

Ann (aged seven) was holding a hen
Made all of sugar ; and Julia (ten)
Had shimmery ink and a carven pen.

John (the youngest) was first of the three
To speak ; with a dagger that shone came he,
Its hilt was of black, black ebony.

“ Hold this dagger, and twist it round
Thrice in your hand when you hear the sound
Of midnight chiming ; then dag the ground.

“ In a trice thereafter you’ll learn to aim,
And your larder will bulge with all manner of game
Shot by you skilfully.” Ann then came.

“ Eat of my magic and sugary bird
One third at sunset, at dawn one third,
And the rest when a breeze in the branches is heard.

“ And your temper will never again turn queer
At folly or trickery, curse or sneer.”
Then Julia came ; and she said to me, “ Here,

“ Take this ink, that is shimmery bright,
And the carven pen, and in capitals write
Your name thrice times on a moonless night.

“ Urdu will come of its own self then.”
I took the dagger, the sugary hen,
The shimmery ink, and the carven pen.

I held that dagger, and twisted it round
Thrice in my hand, when I heard the sound
Of midnight chiming ; then dagged the ground.

I ate of the magic and sugary bird
One third at sunset, at dawn one third,
And the rest when a breeze in the branches was heard.

I took the ink, so shimmery bright,
And the carven pen and my name did write
In capitals thrice on a moonless night.

And now when I aim at a gun I slay ;
And my temper is sweeter than fresh cut hay ;
And I chatter Urdu the livelong day.

IV
(*W. B. Livermore*)

Love's Hour

YOU turned away, answering not a word,
Answering not a word (your face was hid)
Your face was hid . . . I wondered if you heard.
I wondered if you heard ? I knew you did !

I knew you did because you plucked a flower—
Because you plucked a flower lest you display,
Lest you display your heart in Love's short hour.
Your heart ? In Love's short hour you turned away.



V
(*M. Hughes*)

In Memory

IN the hearts of those I love
Let my headstone be.
Place no granite monument
Gravely over me.
If I am forgotten, then
Let me lie unknown ;
I care not for curious eyes
Gazing at a stone.

The Rambling Sailor

IN the old back streets o' Pimlico
 On the docks at Monte Video
 At the Ring o' Bells on Plymouth Hoe
 He'm arter me now wheerever I go.
 An' dirty nights when the wind do blow
 I can hear him sing-songin' up from sea— :
 Oh ! no man nor woman's bin friend to me
 An' to-day I'm feared wheer to-morrow I'll be,
 Sin' the night the moon lay whist and white
 On the road goin' down to the Lizard Light
 When I heard him hummin' behind me.

*" Oh ! look, boy, look in your sweetheart's eyes
 So deep as sea an' so blue as skies ;
 An' 'tis better to kiss than to chide her,
 If they tell 'ee no tales, they'll tell 'ee no lies
 Of the little brown mouse
 That creeps into the house
 To lie sleepin' so quiet beside her.*

*" Oh ! hold 'ee long, but hold 'ee light
 Your true man's hand when you find him,
 He'll help 'ee home on a darksome night
 Wi' a somethin' bright
 That he'm holdin' tight
 In the hand that he keeps behind him.*

*" Oh ! sit 'ee down to your whack o' pies
 So hot's the stew and the brew likewise
 But whiles you'm scrapin' the plates and dishes,
 A'gapin' down in the shiversome sea
 For the delicate mossels inside o' we
 Theer's a passel o' hungry fishes."*

At the *Halte des Marins* at *Saint Nazaire*
I cussed him, sittin' astride his chair ;
An' Christmas Eve on the Mary Clare
I pitched him a'down the hatch-way stair.
But " Shoutin' and cloutin's nothin' to me,
Nor the hop nor the skip nor the jump," says he,
" For I be walkin' on every quay—"

" So look, boy, look in the dear maid's eyes
And take the true man's hand
And eat your fill o' your whack o' pies
Till you'm starin' up wheer the sea-crow flies
Wi' your head lyin' soft in the sand."



A Health unto Her Majesty

TWO hatless, solemnly gay young men
Entered the private bar.
“Old Port,” said one, “is the only drink
That fits the occasion, don’t you think?”
And the other said: “Right you are.”

Each hatless, solemnly gay young man
Lifted a glass to his lips;
And all the assembled toppers there
Looked on with a blank and fuddled stare
At the silent, reverent sips,
And viewed with a dull surprise
The rapt and radiant eyes.

The hatless, solemnly gay young men
Finished their wine and went.
And each of the twain had a chin held high,
(And one of the pair had a misty eye)
And the customers called for more:
“I never see two such fools before,”
Said one in his wonderment.



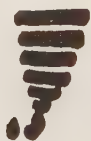
Temptation

THROUGH the open library window
 (Where no longer bloomed eve's deepening splendour
 Ancient calf with velvet rose illuming)
 A blackbird tossed round notes like amber bubbles,
 And the may-warm dusk breathed lilac . . .

Far
 In the hushed serene,
 In the muffling, swooning perfume,
 (Night in May ! Romantic, shadowy May !)
 A tremulous voice broke into silvery laughter
 By murmuring tones subdued . . .

The reformer,
 With black beard and kind brown eyes,
 Moved ; frowned ;
 Recalled his thoughts from the window ;
 Focussed them on work.

I heard him muttering,
 " . . . system of proportional rep— . . . "



The Happy Ducks

THE happy ducks, whose life I tell,
They have a brook where they can sail,
Which winds and winds, as on they fare,
Past treats few ducks can know elsewhere.

Past garden walls deep-mossed and mellow
And harbouring tepid slugs they swallow
With joy-closed eyes, then on their heads
They stand in varied waterweeds—

White star-flowered weed that sure must taste
Like comfits for a naiad's guest,
And long persuasive weed that flows
In ripples smooth to stroke their toes ;

Beneath a bridge so tiny made
In size it seems designed to shade
Three sleepy ducks rather than be
Walked on by folk the size of me.

Then where two willow-rows contain
The stream in leaves, like lovers' lane,
Through which they vanish from my eyes
In distant fields marked checker-wise

With dykes, just near enough to show
The banks are flowered through which they go.
How dull the ducks must be, what fools,
That live in yards and stagnant pools !

When You Are Out

WHEN you are out awhile the quiet house
Speaks of your presence in an hundred ways :
A garment, flung in haste across a chair ;
Ashes of cigarettes ; your latest book
Open upon the table at your place ;
The comb and brush that smoothed your too-smooth hair ;
Your fur-lined slippers and your half-drunk tea
Left to go cold ; the long-neglected fern
Dying from drought ; all silent things that look
As if they longed, like me, for your return.

I sometimes have a fear, when you are out,
That you will die, and they will bring you home
Lifeless and cold ; and all these things—and I
Shall wait for evermore for you to come,
Haunting this lonely house until we die
Or rot.

How can I ever put away
The things that your dear hands disturbed. Ah me !
How (if you'd lived) I should have scolded you
For dropping all this careless ash about
And leaving nearly half a cup of tea.
Have I not asked you almost every day
Not to leave books face downwards, or your clothes
In crumpled heaps upon the chairs—But now
All things are changed, and every little fault
Becomes a memory of what you were
Before you died . . .

The dust will slowly fall
On chair and table, fern and brush-and-comb,
Mirror and book, and pictures on the wall.
People will pass the grime-caked windows, stare,
And go upon their business, unconcerned,
But I . . .

Whose is that footstep in the hall ?

I rush across the room and down the stair
To kiss you—just because you have returned.



XI
(*Ethel Talbot*)

Flitting

“GOOD-BYE !” She shut the door, and, half in fear,
Heard its unhappy, empty kind of bang.
She could not go while that strange echo rang ;
With that sad sound the last sound in her ear.

“ Good-bye ! ” she said. And with a little moan
Opened the door again. Ran up the stair
Half shamed-faced lest some-one should be aware
The fool she was. Yet knew she was alone.

“ Good-bye ! ” There seemed a half-sound ev’ry-where.
Nonsense ;—the hurrying of her feet ! And then
She ran from room to room, and back again
Looking ! What for ? She did not know nor care !

“ Good-bye ! ” She reached the front-door with its fears.
And opened it. And banged it. Locked it tight ;
And stood there in a blaze of summer light.—
And burst into a sudden storm of tears !

Ryton Firs (a Fragment)

Prelude

DEAR boys, they've killed our woods : the ground
Now looks ashamed, to be shorn so bare ;
Naked lank ridge and brooding mound
Seem shivering cowed in the April air.

They well may starve, hills that have been
So richly and so sturdily fleeced.
Who made this upland, once so green,
Crouch comfortless, like an ill-used beast ?

We fools let loose the frantic mood
That toppled Europe down pell-mell ;
It rippled against our quietude,
And Ryton Firs, like Europe, fell.

Now the axe hews, the bill-hook lops.
The owls have flown to Clifford's Mesne,
The foxes found another copse ;
The badger trotted to Mitcheldean.

But where is our cool pine-fragrance fled ?
Where now our sun-flecked loitering hours,
Wading in yellow or azure or red,
Daffodil, bluebell, foxglove flowers ?

Where is our Spring's woodland delight
To scatter her small green fires like dew ?
Our riding, a blade of golden light
Cleaving our summer shade in two ?

The wind comes noiseless down the hill
That once might just have left the sea,
And would our Glostershire windows fill
With the sound of the shores of Anglesey.

The poor trees, all undignified,
Mere logs, that could so sing and gleam,
Laid out in long rows side by side
Across the sloping ground, might seem

A monstrous march of rugged brown
Caterpillars, gigantically
Over the hill-top swarming down
To browse their own lost greenery.

The last we saw of our lovely friends !
Cannibal grubs !—Then came the wains
To cart them off ; their story ends
Not upright still among winds and rains,

As tall trees hope to end, at sea,
More drest in graces than the shine
Of glittering winter : no, but to be
Props in a Glamorgan mine.

So come : where once we loved their shade,
We'll take their ghost an offering now.
Here is an image I have made :
Guarini and Tasso showed me how.

The Dream

All round the knoll, on days of quietest air,
Secrets are being told ; and if the trees
Speak out—let them make uproar loud as drums—
'Tis secrets still, shouted instead of whisper'd.

There must have been a warning given once :
“ No tree, on pain of withering and sawfly,
To reach the slimmest of his snaky toes
Into this mounded sward and rumple it ;
All trees stand back : taboo is on this soil.”—

The trees have always scrupulously obeyed.
The grass, that elsewhere grows as best it may
Under the larches, countable long nesh blades,
Here in clear sky pads the ground thick and close
As wool upon a Southdown wether's back ;
And as in Southdown wool, your hand must sink
Up to the wrist before it find the roots.
A bed for summer afternoons, this grass ;
But in the Spring, not too softly entangling
For lively feet to dance on, when the green
Flashes with daffodils. From Marcle way,
From Dymock, Kempley, Newent, Bromesberrow,
Redmarley, all the meadowland daffodils seem
Running in golden tides to Ryton Firs,
To make the knot of steep little wooded hills
Their brightest show : O bella età de l'oro !
Now I breathe you again, my woods of Ryton :
Not only golden with your daffodil-fires
Lying in pools on the loose dusky ground
Beneath the larches, tumbling in broad rivers
Down sloping grass under the cherry trees
And birches : but among your branches clinging
A mist of that Ferrara-gold I first

Loved in the easy hours then green with you ;
And as I stroll about you now, I have
Accompanying me—like troops of lads and lasses
Chattering and dancing in a shining fortune—
Those mornings when your alleys of long light
And your brown rosin-scented shadows were
Enchanted with the laughter of my boys.

The Voices in the Dream

Follow my heart, my dancing feet,
Dance as blithe as my heart can beat.
Only can dancing understand
What a heavenly way we pass
Treading the green and golden land,
Daffodillies and grass.

I had a song, too, on my road,
But mine was in my eyes ;
For Malvern Hills were with me all the way,
Singing loveliest visible melodies
Blue as a south-sea bay ;
And ruddy as wine of France
Breadths of new-turn'd ploughland under them glowed.
'Twas my heart then must dance
To dwell in my delight ;
No need to sing when all in song my sight
Moved over hills so musically made
And with such colour played.—
And only yesterday it was I saw
Veil'd in streamers of grey wavering smoke
My shapely Malvern Hills.
That was the last hail-storm to trouble spring :
He came in gloomy haste,

Pusht in front of the white clouds quietly basking,
In such a hurry he tript against the hills
And stumbling forward spilt over his shoulders
All his black baggage held,
Streaking downpour of hail.
Then fled dismayed, and the sun in golden glee
And the high white clouds laught down his dusky ghost.

For all that's left of winter
Is moisture in the ground.
When I came down the valley last, the sun
Just thawed the grass and made me gentle turf,
But still the frost was bony underneath.
Now moles take burrowing jaunts abroad, and ply
Their shoveling hands in earth
As nimbly as the strokes
Of a swimmer in a long dive under water.
The meadows in the sun are twice as green
For all the scatter of fresh red mounded earth,
The mischief of the moles :
No dullish red, Glostershire earth new-delved
In April ! And I think shows fairest where
These rummaging small rogues have been at work.
If you will look the way the sunlight slants
Making the grass one great green gem of light,
Bright earth, crimson and even
Scarlet, everywhere tracks
The rambling underground affairs of moles :
Though 'tis but kestrel-bay
Looking against the sun.

But here's the happiest light can lie on ground,
Grass sloping under trees
Alive with yellow shine of daffodils !
If quicksilver were gold,
And troubled pools of it shaking in the sun,

It were not such a fancy of bickering gleam
As Ryton daffodils when the air but stirs.
And all the miles and miles of meadowland
The spring makes golden ways,
Lead here, for here the gold
Grows brightest for our eyes,
And for our hearts lovelier even than love.
So here, each spring, our daffodil festival.

How smooth and quick the year
Spins me the seasons round !
How many days have slid across my mind
Since we had snow pitying the frozen ground !
Then winter sunshine cheered
The bitter skies ; the snow,
Reluctantly obeying lofty winds,
Drew off in shining clouds,
Wishing it still might love
With its white mercy the cold earth beneath.
But when the beautiful ground
Lights upward all the air,
Noon thaws the frozen eaves,
And makes the rime on post and paling steam
Silvery blue smoke in the golden day.
And soon from loaded trees in noiseless woods
The snows slip thudding down,
Scattering in their trail
Bright icy sparkles through the glittering air ;
And the fir-branches, patiently bent so long,
Sigh as they lift themselves to rights again.
Then warm moist hours steal in,
Such as can draw the year's
First fragrance from the sap of cherry wood
Or from the leaves of budless violets ;
And travellers in lanes
Catch the hot tawny smell

Reynard's damp fur left as he sneakt marauding
Across from gap to gap ;
And in the larch woods on the highest boughs
The long-eared owls like grey cats sitting still
Peer down to quizz the passengers below.

Light has killed the winter and all dark dreams.
Now winds live all in light,
Light has come down to earth and blossoms here,
And we have golden minds.
From out the long shade of a road high-bankt,
I came on shelving fields ;
And from my feet cascading,
Streaming down the land,
Flickering lavish of daffodils flowed and fell ;
Like sunlight on a water thrill'd with haste,
Such clear pale quivering flame,
But a flame even more marvellously yellow.
And all the way to Ryton here I walkt
Ankle-deep in light.
It was as if the world had just begun ;
And in a mind new-made
Of shadowless delight
My spirit drank my flashing senses in,
And gloried to be made
Of young mortality.
No darker joy than this
Golden amazement now
Shall dare intrude into our dazzling lives :
Stain were it now to know
Mists of sweet warmth and deep delicious colour,
Those lovable accomplices that come
Befriending languid hours.

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